

It is rare to find an issue that is so clearly a win-win for everyone involved. From the University of Nebraska to the Association of Equipment Manufacturers, the Nebraska Farm Bureau, and the American Conservation Coalition, support is growing for making precision agriculture more accessible.

Another bill I introduced with Senator KLOBUCHAR in April, which would help farmers connect precision ag technologies to each other through the internet of things, has been met with a similar outpouring of support. That is because precision agriculture—those technologies—really have no drawbacks. It is better for ag producers, rural communities, consumers, and the environment, all at the same time.

The biggest obstacle is the cost, and that burden falls mostly on the smaller farms that can't afford to take the risks. Well, my bill will give smaller operations the backing that they need to manage those risks.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. GILLIBRAND). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I understand Senator WHITEHOUSE has reserved time on the floor, and I will yield to him when he does arrive, but I would like to say a few words.

I would like to talk about the state of the coronavirus epidemic in our country. But before I do I want to respond to the Senate Parliamentarian's ruling last night on immigration reform.

While I am disappointed by this decision, I am not giving up on this fight. There are too many lives at stake. Over the past 18 months, thousands of DACA recipients and other immigrants have saved American lives as doctors, intensive care nurses, paramedics, respiratory therapists. They have risked their own lives for us, for our friends and loved ones. The least we can do to honor their sacrifice is give them a path to legal status in America.

In the coming days, Senate Democrats will present an alternative proposal to the Senate Parliamentarian. But the fact is, we already know how essential immigrants are to America and our economic future.

During the pandemic, undocumented immigrants have not only been saving lives in our Nation's hospitals. They have been toiling in extreme heat on farms across the country to secure the food that we eat every day in America. They have defended our national security as members of the military. They have been working as home health aides, helping care for our parents and

family members with disabilities. And they have been caring for our children as teachers and childcare workers.

They are Americans in every way except for their official legal status. It is far past time to fix that, and that is exactly what Senate Democrats intend to do through budget reconciliation.

This is an issue which is not new to the Senate. It is certainly not new to me. It was 20 years ago that I introduced the DREAM Act—20 years.

Of course, many people have said: DURBIN, if you are such a great legislator, what are you waiting for?

And a lot of these Dreamers and DACA-protected people have said the same.

I will tell them that, on at least five separate occasions, we have brought the DREAM Act to the floor of the Senate only to be stopped by the filibuster—five times during the course of 20 years.

The one time that it was passed during comprehensive immigration reform, the Republican leadership in the House refused to consider the measure, and it was left in the current state.

I recall the previous President, Donald Trump, assuring me that he was going to take care of those kids—in his own words. Well, he certainly did. He tried to abolish DACA and to remove the protection which 780,000 of these young people have.

You see, these are young people who came to the United States as infants, toddlers, and little babies. They were brought here by their parents, and they grew up in America and did everything you were supposed to do—went to school, had the odd jobs, worked around the house, believed in the future of this country. But when they showed up in the classrooms every day, they lifted their hands and pledged allegiance to that flag. They believed it was their flag. And it wasn't until later in life that their parents leveled with them, told them that wasn't the case at all; they were undocumented—technically illegal, in the words of some.

I can't imagine having that hanging over your head, knowing that any day there might be a knock on the door, that someone in your family might be removed, or your whole family deported, for that matter. They lived under that shadow their entire lives, and they still did remarkable, courageous things.

I have come to the floor of the Senate 125 times to tell their stories individually with color photographs, to let my colleagues know that there are people behind these numbers—real people, amazing people. And over the years that I have told their stories, more and more of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have come up afterward and said: What can we do?

Well, what we can do is we can pass legislation to give these young people a chance, to give many others a chance too.

These farm workers, for goodness sakes—half of the farm workers toiling

in America today are undocumented. We don't think twice about whether we are going to eat the fruit that they pick or the vegetables they deliver to the market. We take it for granted that it will be there. Many of these people have spent a lifetime working for dirt wages in miserable jobs that many Americans wouldn't consider.

To give them a chance to become legal in America is a reflection on who we are.

I know my critics will say: Aren't you paying any attention to the southern border?

I am. There is a lot to be done. Right now, we are dealing in Del Rio, TX, with thousands of Haitians who were lured by some of these smugglers and others to come to that port in the hope of being able to enter the United States. That is not happening in most cases. Many of them are even being returned to Haiti.

It doesn't solve the individual family problem but addresses the reality of immigration in America today. There are certain fundamentals we need in any immigration system. We won't get those fundamentals with the current laws.

What are they? Basically, we need border security. In an age of terrorism and drugs, we need to know who is coming into this country and whether they are bringing anything with them that will hurt anyone. Secondly, we should never knowingly allow a dangerous person to come in the United States or to stay in an undocumented status, period. And number three, America cannot absorb, at any given time, everyone who wants to come and live here. We have to have an orderly process, one that reflects our values, particularly for those who are seeking asylum and refugee status.

The refugee issue was brought home to us a few days ago in Afghanistan, where families in that country, who had helped American soldiers in every way that they could and risked their own lives, asked for refuge in the United States. The outpouring of support for those refugees outweighed the numbers of critics and cynics, and I am glad because I think that reflects who we really are.

In the next few hours and days, we will be preparing an alternative approach to the Parliamentarian in the hopes that it can be included in reconciliation and not be stopped again by the filibuster, which has held it in the past.

I see my colleague, Senator WHITEHOUSE, has arrived.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I return to the Senate floor to again discuss the scheme to capture our Supreme Court; in this case, it will be through the lens of how recent Justices got on the Court. And I will choose Brett Kavanaugh.